



DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2020

AT

TEMPORARY CITY HALL

TAUNTON, MASSACHUSETTS

7:00 PM

FOR THE PROPOSED

**ROUTE 44 (DEAN ST.) RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT
Project Management Section**

IN THE CITY OF TAUNTON, MASSACHUSETTS

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION**

**JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR**

**PATRICIA A. LEAVENWORTH, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER**

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING
Project File No. 606024

A Design Public Hearing will be held by MassDOT to discuss the proposed Route 44 (Dean Street) Reconstruction project in Taunton, MA.

WHERE: Taunton Temporary City Hall
Chester R. Martin Council Chambers
141 Oak Street
Taunton, MA 02780

WHEN: Wednesday, February 12, 2020 @ 7:00PM

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become acquainted with the proposed Route 44 (Dean Street) Reconstruction project. All views and comments made at the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of widening Route 44 from Route 104 (South Main Street) to Arlington Street in order to provide two lanes of travel in each direction as well as a sidewalk on the northerly side and five-foot bicycle lanes on both sides. The traffic signals at the intersection at Longmeadow Road will be upgraded. Retaining walls will be installed where needed to protect private property. The work also includes drainage and utility improvements.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT's policy concerning land acquisitions will be discussed at this hearing.

Written views received by MassDOT subsequent to the date of this notice and up to five (5) days prior to the date of the hearing shall be displayed for public inspection and copying at the time and date listed above. Plans will be on display one-half hour before the hearing begins, with an engineer in attendance to answer questions regarding this project. A project handout will be made available on the MassDOT website listed below.

Written statements and other exhibits in place of, or in addition to, oral statements made at the Public Hearing regarding the proposed undertaking are to be submitted to Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Roadway Project Management, Project File No. 606024. Such submissions will also be accepted at the hearing. Mailed statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be postmarked no later than ten (10) business days after this public hearing. Project inquiries may be emailed to dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us

This location is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (including but not limited to interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, open or closed captioning for videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats, such as audio tapes, Braille and large print), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), fax (857-368-0602), TTD/TTY (857-368-0603) or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten (10) business days before the meeting.

In case of inclement weather, public hearing cancellation announcements will be posted on the internet at <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/Highway/>

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

PATRICIA A. LEAVENWORTH, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER



Dear Concerned Citizen:

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is committed to building and maintaining a transportation infrastructure that is both safe and efficient for all who use our roadways, bridges, bicycle facilities and pedestrian paths, while maintaining the integrity of the environment.

As part of the design process for this project, we are conducting this public hearing to explain the proposed improvements, listen to your comments and answer any questions you may have. At the conclusion of the hearing, MassDOT will review all of your comments and, where feasible, incorporate them into the design of the project.

We recognize that road and bridge construction can create inconveniences for the public. MassDOT places a great deal of emphasis on minimizing the temporary disruptive effects of construction.

MassDOT encourages input from local communities and values your opinions. Please be assured that we will undertake no project without addressing the concerns of the community.

Sincerely,

Patricia A Leavenworth, P. E.
Chief Engineer

WHAT IS A PUBLIC HEARING?

WHY A PUBLIC HEARING?

To provide an assured method whereby the Commonwealth of Massachusetts can furnish to the public information concerning the State's highway construction proposals, and to afford every interested resident of the area an opportunity to be heard on any proposed project. At the same time, the hearings afford the Commonwealth an additional opportunity to receive information from local sources which would be of value to the State in making its final decisions to what design should be advanced for development.

WHY NOT A VOTE ON HIGHWAY PLANS?

The hearings are not intended to be a popular referendum for the purpose of determining the nature of a proposed improvement by a majority of those present. They do not relieve the duly constituted officials of a State highway department of the necessity for making decisions in State highway matters for which they are charged with full responsibility.

WHAT DOES A PUBLIC HEARING ACCOMPLISH?

It is designed to ensure the opportunity for, or the availability of, a forum to provide factual information which is pertinent to the determination of the final alternative considered by the state to best serve the public interest, and on which improvement projects are proposed to be undertaken.

It is important that the people of the area express their views in regard to the proposal being presented, so that views can be properly recorded in the minutes of the meeting. These minutes will be carefully studied and taken into consideration in the determination of the final design.

TO SAFEGUARD THE PROPERTY OWNER

If your property, or a portion of it, must be acquired by the State for highway purposes in the interest of all people of the Commonwealth, your rights are fully protected under the law. Briefly, here are some of the answers to questions you might ask.

1. WHO CONTACTS ME?

Representatives of the Right of Way Bureau of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's Highway Division. They will explain the impacts and your rights as protected under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 79.

2. WHAT IS A FAIR PRICE FOR MY PROPERTY?

Every offer is made to ensure that an equitable value is awarded to you for the property, or to appraise the "damage" to the property as a result of the acquisition. MassDOT appraisers, independent appraisers, MassDOT "Review Appraisers" and a Real Estate Appraisal Review Board may all contribute in arriving at an award of damages. The State also pays a proportionate part of the real estate tax for the current year for fee takings, and interest from the date the property is acquired to the payment date, on all impacts.

3. MUST I ACCEPT THE DEPARTMENT'S OFFER?

No. If, after the figure established as market value has been offered to the owner, the owner feels he or she is not being offered a fair price, he or she has the right, within three years, to appeal to the courts. Pending a court decision, he or she can be paid on a "pro-tanto" basis (or "for the time being") that in no way prejudices the court appeal.

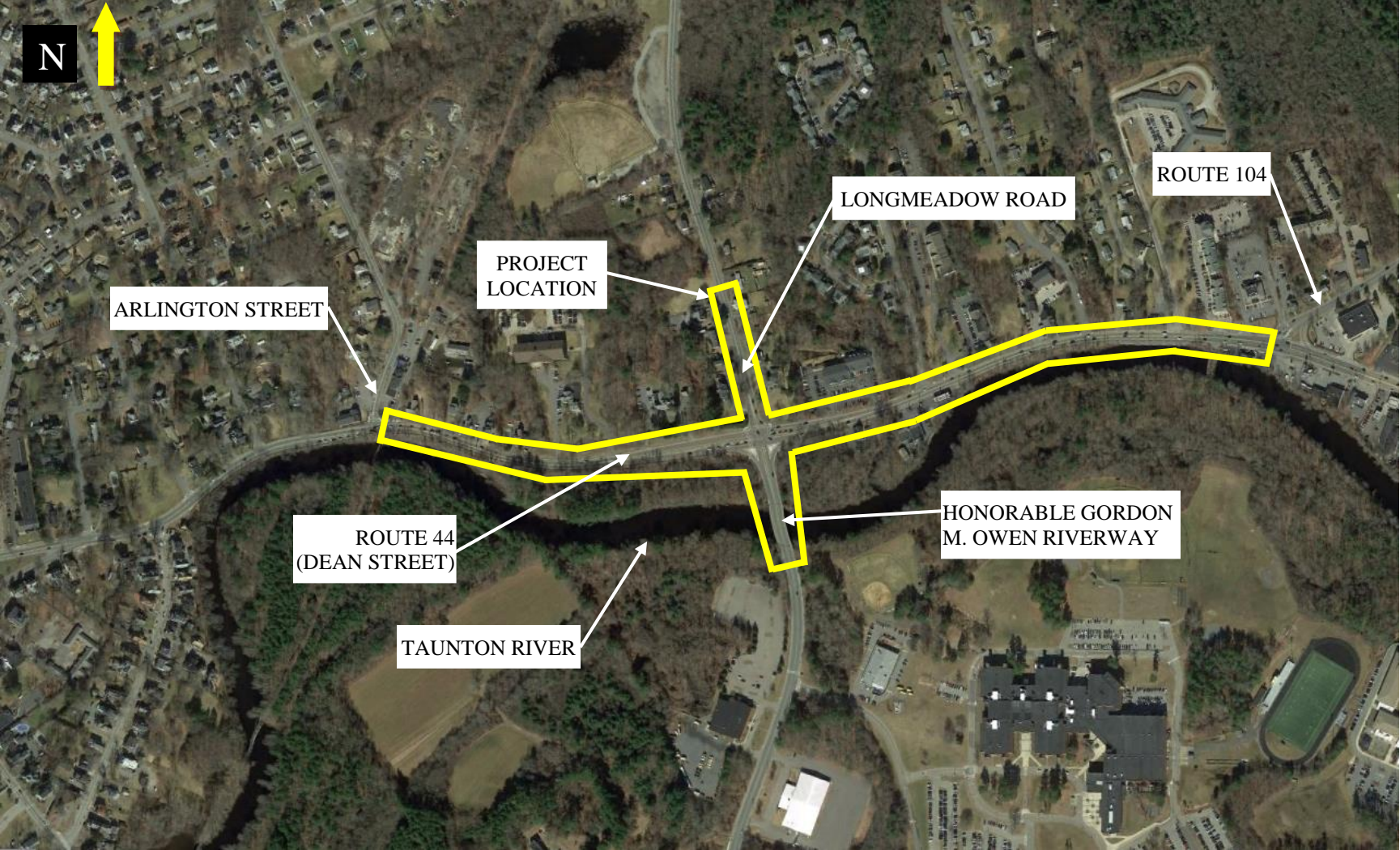
4. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MY HOUSE?

The owner will have the opportunity to buy back his or her house, provided he or she has a location to which it can be moved, and the proper permits for its removal. If the owner does not wish to repurchase, the house will be advertised for bids. The highest bidder, who must also have a location and permits for removal, will be awarded the house. Otherwise, the structure will be slated for demolition.

5. WHAT HAPPENS IF I MUST RELOCATE?

In addition to the market value of the property, the Department pays certain relocation benefits for both owners and tenants of acquired residences and businesses who meet eligibility requirements. Assistance in relocation is also provided. Department brochures are available for details on these benefits.

**ROUTE 44 (DEAN STREET) RECONSTRUCTION
TAUNTON, MA**



PROJECT LOCATION AND LIMITS

The proposed roadway improvement project includes Route 44 (Dean Street) in the City of Taunton, Massachusetts. The project begins approximately 100 feet east of Arlington Street (by the railroad tracks) and ends at the intersection with Route 104.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The Reconstruction of Route 44 (Dean Street) in Taunton, MA is intended to provide improved pedestrian, bicycle and traffic flow through the corridor, while addressing subsurface conditions which are affecting the long-term condition of the roadway. The primary objectives of the project are to enhance pedestrian and bicycle amenities, remove merge conditions which impact traffic flow, upgrade pedestrian crossings at signalized intersections, provide sheltered bus stops at intersections, and provide geotechnical improvements to address the subsurface conditions.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

Route 44 (Dean Street) exhibits a number of physical and operational deficiencies which require improvements for safe and efficient vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian use. Improvements were developed to mitigate these deficiencies based on an examination of existing conditions and future traffic volumes. The proposed improvements include the widening of Route 44 to provide a consistent 4-lane cross section from Route 104 to the Longmeadow Road/Honorable Gordon M. Owen Riverway intersection. Five foot (5') shoulders will also be provided on both sides for bicycle accommodation and the sidewalk will be retained along the northerly side of Route 44. The traffic control signal at the Longmeadow Road/ Honorable Gordon M. Owen Riverway will be completely updated and provide for pedestrian signals with actuated pushbuttons. Pedestrian accommodations will also be provided at the signalized Route 104 intersection, and bus stops with shelters and pullouts will be provided to serve pedestrians traveling on the regional GATRA bus line. A retaining wall will be constructed along the side of Route 44 adjacent to the Taunton River to address subsurface conditions. The project also includes associated roadway work, including full depth roadway reconstruction, installation of new granite curbing, modifications to the existing drainage system, and upgrading pavement markings and traffic signing.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Route 44 (Dean Street) will remain open to traffic throughout construction. At least one lane of traffic will be maintained during normal construction hours in both directions. During construction, it may necessary to perform certain disruptive operations, such as pavement milling and resurfacing, during the night time hours. Occasional short traffic disruptions may occur but every effort will be made to minimize inconvenience to the public. Access to abutters will be maintained throughout construction.

UTILITIES

Utility poles will be relocated to accommodate the proposed improvements and reconstruction of sidewalks throughout the project limits. The two sets of utility poles along both the northern and southern sides of Route 44 will be consolidated to a single set of poles along the northern side of Route 44.

RIGHT OF WAY

MassDOT is responsible for securing all needed rights to perform the roadway work. Permanent takings are needed to provide the necessary widening along Route 44 and Longmeadow Road. Permanent easements are also needed for resetting and maintenance of utility poles away from the proposed roadway and for proposed sidewalks. Temporary easements will be required for slope grading and for reconstruction of driveways.

PROJECT COST

This project was approved by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation for Federal Aid funding. The total project construction value stands at approximately \$9.65 million and is programmed on the 2022 Regional Transportation Improvement Program.

PROJECT STATUS

The plans on display tonight are at the 25% Submittal Stage. Comments received this evening will be considered in the final design. The design is anticipated to be complete in Fiscal Year 2022. The construction is anticipated to begin during the spring of 2022 with the majority of the work completed over two construction seasons. The project must be programmed in the Transportation Improvement Program in the appropriate Federal Fiscal Year in order for MassDOT to solicit bids for eventual construction.

Please Fold and Tape



Please Place
Appropriate
Postage Here

Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E.
Chief Engineer
MassDOT – Highway Division
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116-3973

RE: Public Hearing
Route 44 Reconstruction
TAUNTON
Project File No. 606024
Project Management Section

